



Case Study: A stepped approach to health program planning in Planetville, MA

Introduction

Planetville, MA is an urban city of about 80,000 people and a growing population of immigrants and refugees. There are several community-based organizations (CBOs) in Planetville that focus on the health needs of the ethnically diverse groups that live and work there. Marie is a new program planner for a small CBO whose mission is to provide health education and advocacy for the community's underserved youth populations. She works with a predominantly Latino population, most of whom come from the Caribbean. The organization's funds, time and staff capacity are limited. Marie has recently learned about a systematic approach to program planning and wants to use it, though she is unsure about how best to do this.

Step 1: Review Data

Marie has come across a Request for Proposals (RFP) from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to do work on community-wide youth tobacco reduction initiatives. She believes that tobacco use is an important issue affecting her community and wants to convince her organization to apply for the grant. As she begins to build her case she asks for your help.

- What kind of data will she need to find to make her case convincing?



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Step 2: Finding the right partners

After meeting with her colleagues and looking at the data, Marie made her case that youth tobacco use is an important issue to tackle in her community. What's next? She sees that the RFP asks for a list of partners. With that in mind, bringing together a number of partners from different arenas may be the most effective way to address this problem, particularly since other community organizations are probably already working on this issue. Since she is just beginning the planning process, she may find that she will need to bring in additional partners later to meet all of her needs. At this time, she wants to find partners who will support her RFP and join in the program planning process.

- What partners should she bring to the table and why?



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Step 3: Explore potential approaches

Now that Marie is armed with data and local expertise, she can start looking for the types of approaches (or strategies for creating change) that would be useful to target tobacco use among youth. She will be meeting with her partners and colleagues soon and has been asked to provide a recommendation to the group. Marie wants to use the Community Guide as a resource to help her find the approaches that are appropriate for tobacco prevention and cessation among youth.

- Given her resources what approaches should she explore in the Community Guide?



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Step 4a: Choose the Program

Now that Marie has chosen a relevant approach, she needs to find a few potential programs and then work with her partners to select one. There are a number of tobacco prevention and cessation programs available, but she wants to choose one that is evidence-based so that she can maximize the chances that her effort will have a significant impact on the young people in her community. She also knows that the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will look favorably upon her application if she uses this kind of program.

- Using her goals and objectives, what search criteria would you suggest she use to find appropriate programs?

Marie's Goals and Objectives

- Project Goals:
 - Prevent tobacco use initiation among non-smoking students at Planetville High School
 - Increase tobacco quit rates among smoking students at Planetville High School
- Project Objectives:
 - After 1 year, 90% of Planetville High students who were nonsmokers will remain tobacco free.
 - After 1 year, 25% of Planetville High students who were smokers will make a successful quit attempt.
 - After 2 years, the sale of tobacco to minors in Planetville will be reduced by 50%.



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Step 4b: Marie's Update

After choosing the *Project EX-4* program, Marie and her partners submitted the grant application and were successful! The group must now plan for delivering the program, but the first step will be to decide what the program will look like in their community.

A Summary of Marie's Program Choice: Project EX-4

Project EX-4 addresses smoking cessation among adolescent smokers and smoking prevention for nonsmokers. The program stresses motivation, coping skills, and personal commitment. It uses engaging and motivating activities such as games, mock talk shows, and yoga to prevent, reduce, or stop smoking among adolescents. The program also teaches self-control, anger management, mood management, and goal-setting techniques. Adolescents are provided with accurate information about the social, emotional, environmental, and physiological consequences of tobacco use.

Customize and Localize the Program

Since the group is using an evidence-based program, it is important that the version they deliver is as similar to the original as possible. At the same time, Marie wants to ensure that the program is relevant and has as much impact as possible in her community. She needs to develop an adaptation plan to present to her partners. Marie will need to take into account that her target population is predominantly Caribbean-American and is attending one large high school (not an alternative school).

- What would you suggest she customize? Please use Handout 3 to help her decide what adaptations are necessary.
- How would you suggest she test any modifications?



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Step 5: Evaluation Plan

Marie and her partners have customized *Project EX-4* to meet their needs. She will now create a plan to evaluate the success of the program.

For the process evaluation, she wants to keep track of whether or not they are delivering the program as intended.

- What should she track?
- When?

For the outcome evaluation, she wants to find out if the school-based program and community-based strategies worked and refers back to the project objectives. At this time she may modify her objectives based on the program she has selected and the evaluation plan that it suggests. Her new objectives are listed here:

- 1 year after completing the program, 90% of students who were nonsmokers will remain tobacco free.
- 1 year after completing the program, 30% of students who were smokers will make a successful quit attempt.
- After 2 years, the sale of tobacco to minors in Planetville will be reduced by 50%.
- How will she measure outcomes?
- When will she measure outcomes?

Last, Marie wants to create a dissemination plan to share the findings from the evaluations.

- How can she share these findings?
- Who should she share them with?